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Ophthalmoscopic Examinations of the Insane at the State Hospital, Norristown, and the Insane Department of the Philadelphia Hospital.

Read before the Philadelphia County Medical Society, April 28, 1886.

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Ophthalmoscopic Examinations of the Insane at the State Hospital, Norristown, and the Insane Department of the Philadelphia Hospital.

HE systematic examination of the eyes of the insane at the two hospitals mentioned was begun some three years ago. 707 inmates have been ophthalmoscopically examined: of these 130 were males and 577 females; 62 were inmates of the Philadelphia Hospital and 645 were at the Norristown Hospital. In addition to these, perhaps a hundred private and dispensary patients have been examined in the same manner.

I must acknowledge my indebtedness to Drs. Robert H. Chase and Alice Bennett, of the Norristown Hospital, and to Dr. D. D. Richardson, former chief, and Dr. Philip Leidy, present chief, of the Insane Department Philadelphia Hospital, for kindness and courtesy in placing their patients at my disposal, and also to Dr. Hunt, formerly of the Norristown Hospital, and to Drs. Henry and Avery, of the Philadelphia Hospital, for assistance rendered.

Of these 707 hospital patients, perhaps 150 have been examined under atropia as well as without it; perhaps the half have been examined upon two or more occasions, sometimes as many as eight or ten times. This has been done both to verify previous work and also to watch the eyeconditions during various stages of the mental derangement.

The various structures of the eye were carefully examined and vision taken in all cases; the ear and pharynx were examined in about the half of them.

The refraction has been measured by the ophthalmoscope,—usually without, sometimes with, atropia or homatropin. All cases of myopic astigmatism are included in the column devoted to myopia; cases presenting nearly normal conditions are classified in the table as nearly normal; cataracts have only been noted when the

lens-cloud prevented a fair ophthalmoscopic view; iritic deposits are noted only under similar circumstances; retinal hyperæmia expresses the condition of an increased amount of blood with little or no effusion; retinal congestion expresses a more marked increase of fulness with effusion; papillitis includes even the slightest grades of swelling of the disk (including the conditions of ischæmia and ædema of the disk); slight atrophy expresses the minor grades of atrophy; the terms choroiditis, hemorrhagic retina, albuminuric retina, anæmic retina, and glaucoma have their ordinary acceptation.

Table II. will serve to indicate the results

obtained.

I might here state that I have selected the statistics of Drs. Allbutt,* Noyes,† and Klein t with which to compare my results. Dr. Allbutt has published the ophthalmoscopic records of 214 insane patients; Dr. Noyes, of 60 cases; and Dr. S. Klein, of 134 cases, -making a total of 408 cases.

The total number of my examinations is 707: from this we must subtract 20 cases of cataract and 2 cases of iritic deposits, leaving 685 as the number of patients examined ophthalmoscopically. Of these, 136 are nearly normal, leaving 549 as having some change visible in the eye. This gives as the percentage of the nearly normal cases 19.85 per cent. and of abnormal cases 80.15 per cent. Drs. Allbutt, Noyes, and Klein examined 408 cases, of which 107 presented a healthy or at most a questionable (Klein) fundus, leaving a balance of 301 as accompanied by intraocular changes. The percentages of nearly

^{*} Use of the Ophthalmoscope in Diseases of the Nervous System and of the Kidneys, 1871. † American Journal of Insanity, 1872, vol. xxviii. p. 410. † Wiener Med. Presse, 1877, p. 89.

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normal cases is 26.22 per cent., and of abnormal cases 73.78 per cent.

Table I.

Total No. No. with Fundus Number Nearly Patients. Changes. 107=26.22% 301=73.78% 550=80.15%

Allbutt, Noyes, and Klein... Lautenbach....

Considering the differences of observers, the discrepancy existing between the percentages, a discrepancy of 6.33 per cent., requiring but the transposition of 3.165 per cent. of the cases from one to the other column (from normal to abnormal in the one case or from abnormal to nor-

mal in the other) to make them accord accurately, is much less than is to be expected.

Another, close approximation developed, during a study of cases of acute mania (including the recurrent and periodic varieties which are included in the tables of Drs. Allbutt and Noyes), in a paper presented to the Neurological Society.* 11.82 per cent. of my 103 cases of acute mania the fundus was normal; in 12.50 per cent. of Allbutt and Noves's 40 cases, no change in the eye-ground was observed.

I think that we are now in a position, perhaps, to explain why many who had begun such ophthalmological examinations desisted after a short period of work.

Acute-mania cases would scarcely be presented to an investigator in the early part of his work: they are frequently difficult to control and unmanageable. Again, dementias and chronic manias would be sparingly brought forward for examination, because of the difficulty of moving them and of their frequent stubbornness. Cases of melancholia are usually the best to manage, the most willing to have something new tried, and would naturally make up the greater part of the early work of an investigator in this field, and it is just in this class of cases that changes in the eyeground occur less frequently.

Taking the cases of Allbutt, Noyes, and Klein, we find that they examined 24 cases of melancholia. Of these Drs. Allbutt and Noves examined 18 cases, finding in 8 cases the fundus healthy. Dr. Klein's 6 cases are here excluded, as he notes nothing whatever concerning the condition of the eye. We have, then, 44.44 per cent. as healthy, and 55.56 per cent. as abnormal. In my own 138 cases (one cataract case

excluded), 40 cases were nearly normal, in other words, 28.98 per cent.

We also notice that 30 cases of melancholia are put down as connected with retinal hyperæmia. No doubt many of these cases would be examined and, unless attention was particularly called to the hyperæmic condition, no note would be taken of it. Of the 138 cases, 70 (or 50.72 per cent.) are either nearly normal or have a hyperæmic retina.

Contrasting these results with those found in acute mania (excluding recurrent and periodic), we find that 71 cases were examined ophthalmoscopically, of which number but 5, or 7 per cent., were nearly normal; of chronic mania 137 cases were examined, of which 17, or 12.41 per cent., were nearly normal; of cases of mania (excluding monomania, which perhaps does not properly belong under this general heading) 242 cases were examined, of which 29, or 11.98 per cent., were nearly normal. It is easy to see that, had attention been bestowed exclusively upon cases of mania, eye-ground changes would have been observed, and that in an unusual

The large number of cases of retinal hyperæmia, 104, and of retinal congestions, 75, a total of 179 cases (or 25.98 per cent.), seems remarkable, when we consider that the class of patients examined are by no means great readers, nor do they use their eyes in trying occupa-

The number of atrophies occurring in chronic dementia is noticeable. Of 180 cases examined, 83 (or 71.21 per cent.) were atrophic cases.

is that devoted to cases of moral insanity and cranks, of whom 6 cases were examined and no eye-changes observed in any

I have refrained from drawing conclusions, believing that to do this would require more study than has yet been given to the subject, and that, in order the more accurately to study the connection between eye-ground changes and mental derangements, the series of observations here recorded must be compared with a similar series made by the same individual upon those who are mentally sound and healthy. This work is now progressing, and will, when finished, be presented.

^{*} Journal of Mental and Nervous Diseases, July, 1886.

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